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THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND ITS
IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL
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ECONOMIC COOPERATION
CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE
INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 8 May 1998 from the Permanent Representatives of the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a joint statement by the Presidents of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Uzbekistan which was signed on 6 May 1998 during talks between the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Boris Yeltsin, and the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Mr. Islam Karimov (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and of its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 43, 81, 97, 103 and 104, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) S. V. LAVROV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of the Russian Federation
to the United Nations

(Signed) A. V. VOHIDOV
Ambassador
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ANNEX

Joint statement by the Presidents of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Uzbekistan, signed in Moscow on 6 May 1998

The President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Boris Yeltsin, and the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Mr. Islam Karimov, having thoroughly studied the status of relations and prospects for the development of all aspects of cooperation between the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan, and having held a thorough exchange of views on current international problems, state the following:

1. Relations between the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan are progressively developing on the basis of the principles of traditional friendship and good will, sovereign equality and mutual advantage, in accordance with the Treaty on the Foundations of Inter-State Relations, Friendship and Cooperation between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Uzbekistan of 30 May 1992 and the Declaration on the Development and Intensification of All-round Cooperation between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Uzbekistan of 2 March 1994.

Bilateral contacts and exchanges of delegations, including at the highest political level, are being intensified. Inter-Parliamentary links have been revitalized. The Intergovernmental Commission for Economic Cooperation has effectively commenced operations. The treaty and legal basis for Russian-Uzbek relations is being strengthened.

The leaders of the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan are convinced of the need for and see a real opportunity for further increasingly dynamic growth of multifaceted cooperation between the two countries in the context of strategic partnership.

The Russian Federation takes a favourable view of Uzbekistan's important role in the Central Asian region. Uzbekistan recognizes the strategic interests of the Russian Federation in Central Asia and considers that Russian participation in regional affairs promotes the maintenance of a political balance, economic development and the strengthening of regional security and stability. In this connection, greater cooperation between the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan which is consistent with the fundamental interests of both States is also a constructive element of international dimensions.

2. The Russian Federation and Uzbekistan attach the utmost significance to the expansion and deepening of mutually advantageous economic ties.

The Governments of the two countries have been instructed to prepare an agreement on intensifying economic cooperation between the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan for a 10-year period and a corresponding programme of action to provide for the creation of favourable conditions for the expansion of commercial and economic and scientific and technological ties, cooperation in the fuel and energy complex and the promotion of direct links between regions and economic agents.

There is a need to improve the legal regulation of commercial relations and to regulate the system of mutual settlements. The sides have instructed the Governments of the two countries and the Intergovernmental Commission for Economic Cooperation to ensure the necessary State support for these processes.

One of the most promising areas of cooperation is the creation of inter-State financial-industrial groups. It is important to accelerate the implementation of the intergovernmental agreement on the Ilyushin transnational group and cooperation in the production and marketing of IL-114, IL-114T and IL-76MF aircraft. The use of these aircraft on regular air transport routes should be considered a priority task in the relations between the partners in the area of high technology.

Highly promising prospects are opening up in this area with plans for the development, on a multilateral and bilateral basis, of the AN-70 and subsequent generations of aircraft.

The positive experience of partnership in the aircraft industry will be actively utilized to create financial-industrial groups in other areas.

The sides express their mutual interest in strengthening mutually advantageous ties between enterprises in the engineering and chemical industries and agro-industrial complexes, in developing industries for the processing of agricultural produce, and in opening trading houses.

Space research is another area of mutual interest. The sides have stepped up their joint efforts to establish the Suffa international radio astronomical observatory.

The Russian Federation acknowledges Uzbekistan's position in favour of the multimodal transport of gas and oil exports, including their transit through Russian territory, and confirms its readiness to continue to provide the relevant services in the requisite amounts and types.

3. Questions of military security and military and technical cooperation occupy an important place in Russian-Uzbek relations. The sides intend to develop relations of partnership in these spheres on the basis of bilateral agreements.

The deepening of mutual cooperation between the law-enforcement agencies of the two countries will help to strengthen Russian-Uzbek relations. It is planned to fine-tune cooperation in combating the illegal spread of narcotic drugs and the weapons trade, and in other aspects of law enforcement of interest to both countries.

4. The peoples of the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan are historically bound by indissoluble spiritual and cultural ties and their closely interwoven fates. This has made it necessary to develop cooperation in the areas of culture, science, education and information, and to encourage contacts between peoples and public organizations.

The relevant agencies have been instructed to study the question of regularizing the legal status of the citizens of one country who are permanent residents of the other country and the process of migration and protecting the rights of migrants.

The Russian side continues to be interested in opening consular facilities in Uzbekistan and affirms its readiness to take account of a corresponding desire from the Uzbek side.

5. The Russian Federation and Uzbekistan maintain identical or similar positions with regard to current international problems and intend to intensify constructive and systematic cooperation in the area of foreign policy both on a bilateral basis and within the framework of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and other international organizations and forums. They consider that the United Nations has a key role in the maintenance of international peace and security; at the same time the importance of regional organizations in the settlement and prevention of inter-ethnic, religious and other conflicts between and within States is growing.

The Russian Federation favourably views the initiative put forward by Uzbekistan and supported by other Central Asian States to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region, and is prepared to promote it under the auspices of the United Nations, in accordance with international practice. The Russian Federation and Uzbekistan also support the establishment in other regions of zones free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

6. The Russian Federation and Uzbekistan reaffirm their commitment to the purposes and principles of the Commonwealth of Independent States as an integrating instrument for promoting the equal partnership of its members and mutually advantageous cooperation between them.

In the spirit of understanding reached at the meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Commonwealth of Independent States held on 29 April 1998, the sides will endeavour to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of their cooperation with a view to actualizing its creative potential more fully.

7. The sides expressed their principled commitment to the progress of Tajikistan in becoming a democratic secular State based on the rule of law. They noted with satisfaction the progress achieved in national reconciliation in Tajikistan following the signing in Moscow on 27 June 1997 of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan. At the same time, the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan, as guarantor States of the General Agreement, express their concern that implementation of the inter-Tajik agreement, especially with regard to the reintegration, disarmament and disbanding of armed units of the United Tajik Opposition, has fallen significantly behind the agreed timetable.

Calling upon the participants in the peace process in Tajikistan for unconditional and scrupulous fulfilment of the obligations they have assumed, the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan attach importance to the intensification of cooperation on a bilateral basis and within the framework of international

efforts, including those undertaken by the United Nations and OSCE, in the interest of full and timely implementation of the General Agreement.

8. The sides expressed serious alarm at the explosive situation in Afghanistan. Further escalation of tension in that country, which may lead to the spread of religious extremism and terrorism, increased smuggling of weapons and narcotic drugs, and the exodus of refugees, poses a threat to the national interests and security of the States of the region.

The way to peace in Afghanistan lies in constructive dialogue between the opposing sides under the auspices of the United Nations and with the active cooperation of interested States through the creation of a broadly representative Government that will take into account the rule of law and the interests of all ethnic and religious groups and political forces.

The Russian Federation and Uzbekistan, supporting each other's initiatives and efforts, intend jointly to ensure the implementation by the various Afghan groups of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council and the immediate cessation of the prolonged conflict.

9. The Presidents expressed their satisfaction with the substance and results of the State visit by Mr. Karimov to the Russian Federation, which took place in the traditional atmosphere of friendship and mutual understanding. They noted that the visit constituted a milestone in the relations between the two countries.

The President of Uzbekistan, Mr. Islam Karimov, invited the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Boris Yeltsin, to pay a State visit to Uzbekistan. The invitation was gratefully accepted. The time of the visit will be agreed at a future date.

(Signed) B. YELTSIN
President of the Russian Federation

(Signed) I. KARIMOV
President of the Republic of Uzbekistan